

HR Weekly Podcast
May 21, 2008

Today is May 21, 2008, and welcome to the HR Weekly Podcast from the State Office of Human Resources. Today's topic concerns changes to the Human Resources Professional Development, or HRPD, program that will become effective next fiscal year.

The HRPD program is a source of skills enhancement and continuing education for career-oriented practitioners in the arenas of Human Resource Management, or HRM, and Human Resource Development, or HRD. Core courses in the program address the knowledge base that must be held in common by these two aspects of HR practice. And, electives in the program allow participants to develop skills in specific technical areas. Participants in the program learn about future directions in the HR profession, stay abreast of issues in today's workforce and implications for HR practices in agencies, broaden their HR knowledge base and enhance their range of HR skills, network with colleagues throughout state government, and develop their HR leadership potential.

Initiated in 2005, the HRPD program was designed to serve as a succession pool development strategy for state government's HR community, increase collaboration and systems thinking between the HRM and HRD functions, promote innovation and shared "best practices" in agency HR functions, and challenge participants to think strategically and act as business partners to support their agencies' respective missions. Forty-nine participants have completed the program to date.

Early program evaluations indicate agency and participant satisfaction with the program especially with networking opportunities the program offered. The curriculum has been tweaked based on feedback. For instance, some courses have been eliminated, and some courses like Needs Assessment and HR Metrics were added. Also, the program has been streamlined through combining the HRM and HRD tracks.

A more comprehensive program assessment process was initiated in the fall of 2007. Feedback was collected from participants and instructors through focus groups and surveys. Overall findings were, first, that feedback continues to be positive that the program meets a vital need and should be continued. Second, the program should be condensed and the timeframe should be shortened to complete the program. Third, the program should incorporate agency subject matter experts to share agency experiences and give participants real work examples of HR practices in action. Fourth, improving program integration and bridging between sessions was recommended as a way to better connect the topics and help participants retain the content. Fifth, using a blended learning approach, rather than just classroom learning, would appeal to a variety of learning styles. And finally, to capitalize on the networking and increase learning through sharing information, a cohort approach was suggested for the program.

Consequently, OHR will be incorporating curriculum and delivery changes into the HRPD program. Curriculum topics will be consolidated and sequenced into three main areas: big picture issues, such as HR trends, workforce planning, and ethics; HR functions, such as recruitment, compensation, and employee relations; and accountability, which includes HR metrics. A job analysis course will be added since that area serves as the foundation for most HR functions. Delivery changes include the use of e-learning, eliminating electives, and creating a cohort to consolidate the program and improve learning. E-learning will provide learning opportunities for participants outside the classroom and decrease the number of classes needed. In addition, networking tools such as blogs and wikis will increase networking opportunities for the participants. Agency subject matter experts and agency HR staff will share experiences to illustrate HR strategies in practice.

The revised HRPD Program will kick off in January 2009 and end in May 2009.

Program registration information for the new cohort participant group will be posted on OHR's website later this summer and we will notify you when that information is available. Participants who are currently in the

program and are interested in completing program requirements will be able to attend sessions with the cohort next year.

If you have questions about the revised HRPD program, please contact Laurette Burdyl at 803-734-9080.

Thank you.